

Alumni & Friends
**NEWS
LETTER**

Spring Edition 2019

FOOTPRINTS



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A **Season** TO **REMEMBER**

Forty-five years ago, March 1974, Marquette High School had something so very special happen, not only to our high school, but to the entire community. In 1972-73, our basketball team was great, ranked #1 in the State for the majority of the season. They headed into the playoffs with a 23-1 record. However, they met their match at the DeKalb super-sectional game against Kaneland, losing 37-35, with an injured key player, Marty Brown, on the bench.

The defeat left a bitter taste in the mouth of the '73-74 team, as well as their coach, Bob Strickland. The returning lettermen remembered the excitement from the year before, and that memory was etched into their minds when they took the floor for their first practice. This team was good, but were they that good? Would they have a better season than the prior year? The season started with 17 young men, who still have memories of the adventures and friendships made that year.

Maybe you are wondering how their magical season went? Marquette's record going into the regionals was 21-3, ranked 5th in the State. They won the regional, sectional, and then on to the ominous trip to DeKalb for the super sectional. The quiet ride on the bus brought back nothing but memories of the prior year's loss. Getting off the bus, the South Beloit opponents were standing by the bus with wide eyes "they're so tall" Denis Crowley recalls hearing them say. Our starting lineup included one man at 6'1, two at 6'4 and two at 6'5. The Cru won the game almost doubling the score on the SoBos. We were now part of the Elite Eight going to U of I. We were playing the reigning champs, Ridgeway. Marquette wins the game 50-47 on a Marty Brown steal and basket, and Renkosik being fouled making his free throw to a crowd of 13,542 fans in attendance. Saturday afternoon, we met Quincy Catholic in the semi-final game, winning 65-52. The feeling of getting this far and the magic of the season was uppermost in the teams' minds. "Who is this Marquette team anyway", the broadcaster would say. Saturday night came with the title game on the line against Lawrenceville; both teams touting season records of 29-3. The entire community was so excited! This has never happened to our area before and would not happen again until 1991. At the packed Assembly Hall, or glued to the TV., everyone was watching the Cru that night. We played like David and Goliath with only seconds left, our final shot rimmed out. 54-53 was the final score. Sunday morning, St. Patrick's Day, the team loaded the bus for a ride back to Bader. Everywhere they looked, cars were behind them. The caravan of cars increased as they approached LaSalle Co. and more vehicles joined in. The town of Streator and its mayor lined the streets. There were signs along the way, and on the bridge as Ottawa welcomed the 2nd place Crusaders home. The scene at Bader was one they will never forget: the gym was packed with 2,000 cheering fans and the OHS band playing "Jesus Christ Superstar" as the team returned. We lost the game but we made our area proud and it will be something that will never be forgotten. You gave us your best and we will never forget.

Records held by this team: 19th in the state for scoring the most points in a game (139-69 against Braidwood), 3rd in the state for rebounds (1,445), Top scorers in the tournament #3 Marty Brown (70), #4 Keith Renkosik (66), and #5 Nick Tabor (50), Marty Brown was named to the All-Tournament Team.

PLEASE UPDATE YOUR INFO

Contact Diane Whalen with
email or address updates
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MEET THE 1974 CRU

Marty Brown ... senior, captain. Wallace Twp. Graduate University of Nebraska Omaha, full time farmer. Favorite memory meeting their goal to make it to State. Coach **preaching defense and rebounding**. We had height, unselfishness, quickness, depth on the bench and luck.

James Schaibley ... junior. Streator, IL. In sheet metal trade for 42 years. One of his favorite memories is playing Braidwood with the score 139-69. (Before the 3pt. shot) Strick was very **knowledgeable** and could figure out how to win the game.

Keith Renkosik ... senior. Davenport, IA. Graduate of St. Ambrose, worked in hospitality and now for State of IL. We had **high expectations** and kept getting better and better. Strickland knew how to makes us **jelled as a unit**. He was like a dad at school.

Nick Tabor ... senior. Ottawa resident. Graduate of Drake. Dr. Tabor is a podiatrist in Ottawa and LaSalle. He remembers coming onto the floor at Assembly Hall seeing the crowd and tv cameras. He recalls thinking of **Strick as the Bobby Knight of that era**.

Kim Conness ... senior. He received his law degree from Notre Dame. Kim's life was cut short in an auto accident at age of 25. His brother Kent remembers the great season and the Marquette following from the fans and leadership of Marty Brown. Recalls Coach Strickland **took no guff** but was highly respected.

Kevin Schultz ... junior. Ottawa resident. Graduate of NIU and is a financial advisor and insurance agent . He recalls the huge caravan following the bus from Champaign to Ottawa and the packed house at Bader upon arrival home. I feared coach but **totally respected** him.

Denis Crowley ... junior. Cary, IL is where he calls home. Denis' working career has been in the Electrical trades union. His Strickland memory was Morris tournament losing two games and coming back to Bader that night and practicing till 11pm. He **knew we were better than that** and we never lost again until final championship game,

Marty Kuhn ... senior. Marty graduated from ISU as a special education teacher. He passed away in 2012. Per his brother Steve, playing in Champaign was not only thrilling but magical. He always thought **Coach was fair**.

John Conness ... junior. Ottawa resident. Graduated with dental degree from Loyola. Practicing in Ottawa for 34 years. He remembers "it was fun". We played a lot of big schools. He felt Strickland taught them a valuable life **lessons on budgeting time and being successful**.

Dan Martin ... junior. Santa Margarita , Ca. Graduate of Carthage college and is Vice President of Plastic for company he has worked for forty year. His team memory is of Marty Brown and Keith Renkosik, and coach being **fair but tough**.

Steve Luckey ... junior. Toney, AL is his home. Graduate of DeVry Insitute and works on flight simulators for the military. Not a starter but how we all **clicked as a team**. How packed the gym was at all the games. Practicing on Christmas eve and Christmas Day.

Guy Hoffman ... senior. Home is Bloomington, IL. Attended Bradley University. Went on to play pro baseball as a pitcher for 14 seasons. He thought Champaign was the coolest venue he ever saw, little did he know what was in store for him. He remembers how Coach **mentally prepared the players for the games**.

James Bardgett ... junior. Jim lives in Fort Thomas, KY. Graduate of U of I as a surgeon. He was 10th man on the bench and in a close St. Bede game coach put him in he helped to win the game. **Coach was tough!**

Gary Thompson ... junior. Lives in Lawrenceville, GA. Graduated from Notre Dame with an Accounting degree is a V.P. of Finance for medical Company. Gary felt the 1973 team set the bar for this team. He **didn't always see eye to eye** with coach but respected him.

David Wultzen ... junior, manager. Ottawa resident. Graduate of ISU with an education degree and many years of coaching. He recalls not being good enough to make the team but wanted to be part of it. The huge Marquette following. He regarded Strickland with **"fear" but idolized** him with the knowledge he possessed. and felt he learned a great deal about coaching from him.

Greg Kuhn ... junior, manager. Clarendon Hills, IL resident. Graduate with doctorate degree from NIU. He is a teacher at NIU in the "government think tank." Greg recalls after the final game in Champaign they were preparing to load the bus and no one wanted to carry trophy to

the bus so he did. What a **legacy** was left after that season.

Steve Scherer ... junior, manager. Life long resident of Ottawa and has been a union plumber his entire working career. He remembers the super sectional game in DeKalb where we almost double the score on South Beliot and **reversed the curse from 1973**.

Art Rohlman ... Asst. Coach. Resident in DeKalb, IL. Went to NIU on basketball scholarship and graduated 7 years with degree in education. Coached and taught at MHS for 7 years then onto DeKalb High school as coach and AD. He recalls the 74 season as exciting but losing in 73 was tough. He said **Strick's philosophy was for his players to succeed in life after basketball**.

Coach Bob Strickland ... graduate of OHS. Went to Eureka College and got his degree in education. Bob coached most of his life. **Head Coach at Marquette for 11 seasons** compiling a record of **237 wins and 73 losses**. He was named United Press Coach of the year in 1973. Passed away in 2016 in Perham, MN.

The take away from this season was success. The team had success on the floor and in life. Thank you Coach Strickland!



ILLINOIS STATE SCHOLARS

The State Scholar Program recognizes students attending approved high schools for outstanding academic achievement. State scholar designation provides honorary recognition with no monetary award. Approximately the top ten percent of graduates from approved high schools are announced as State Scholars each year.

Congratulations to our five Marquette Academy students named Illinois State Scholars for this prestigious award!

Row 1: **Liam Dougherty, Maggie Hettel**

Row 2: **Wyatt Hettel, Gareth Kent, Jack Durdan**



Pictured from left to right:

Melissa Smith, Donnie Zitt, Angelo Bano, Brandon Ruggles, Grace Rinearson, Maddie McAlpine, Cole Ewers, Eliza Smith, Molly Snook, Sarah Smith, Mia Ferracuti, Father Cory Kregiel, Paige Cottingim, Alex Graham, not pictured Beth Graham.

CRUSADERS FOR LIFE

PRO-LIFE EVENT

A group of Marquette Academy students, supervised by volunteer parents and Father Cory Kregiel, traveled to Washington D.C. in January to attend the world's largest Pro-Life event, March for Life. This annual trip is something our students look forward to every year and is filled with life-changing events, music, speakers, rallies and spiritual growth. #crusadersforlife



INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

MARQUETTE ACADEMY welcomes 9 Foreign Exchange students!

Marquette Academy students are learning about diversity and inclusion by getting to know the nine students we have enrolled at the Academy this year from China. It's a powerful way to break down barriers between nationality, culture, religion, and race. Foreign Exchange students stay with MA host families. The plan is to graduate from MA and then attend college here in the United States. We have 5 new students this year and 4 returning. Marquette Academy is excited to foster this program through Zhou Global LLC with the help of coordinator, Jenny Yang.

Ready to support MA and its students, but don't know how or what to support?

Here are just a few areas that will benefit from your gift: Scholarships, WYSE Team, STEM, Go Club, Fine Arts Club, Tuition Assistance, Sponsor an event, or shop with SCRIP. Please contact the Advancement Office at 815-433-0125 ext. 1018.

To make a donation online visit:
marquetteacademy.net



LIGHT UP THE NIGHT MMM XXXVII

Saturday, May 4, 2019

May Merriment, our school's biggest fundraiser, is on Saturday, May 4, 2019. Your support is an integral part of Marquette Academy's success. Please join us and radiate our strength in Catholic education. With your support, we continue to keep traditions alive and dreams affordable for our students. Last year we were able to give over \$300,000 to assist families with tuition costs. We thank you for your continued support, and invite you to celebrate May Merriment XXXVII, and Light Up the Night with us!

May Merriment guests enjoy an evening of friendship, entertainment, silent and live auction, with food catered by The Cheese Shop, Handy Foods and Monte's Riverside Inn. Tickets cost \$85 per person and include appetizers, gourmet entree stations, desserts, open bar, bidder number and valet service. It's a great time to reconnect with friends and other alumni to support Marquette Academy!

New this year at May Merriment, be a **Table Captain**. Any person or couple can be a Captain. Reserve a table of 8 and receive VIP treatment at the event! Call for details.

Don't miss out on our **\$25,000 Cash Raffle!**

With 5 other cash prizes available: 1 - \$7,000, 1 - \$2,500, 2 - \$1,000, and 1 - \$1,000 Early Bird drawing, held April 26, 2019 at 3pm. (includes all tickets received and recorded by noon on April 26). Early Bird winning ticket will be re-entered for the drawings held at MMM XXXVII. Tickets cost \$100.

Preview the auction items ahead of time or donate to our cause online at **www.bidpal.net/mmm37**.

Contact the Advancement Office today for your Cash Raffle Ticket, to be a Table Captain or to be added to the guest list at **815-433-0125 ext. 1016 (Phyllis) or 1017 (Julie)**.



Committee Chairpeople are: (from left to right) Greg and Julie Lechtenberg, Lisa Killelea, Juli Kent. Honorary: Karen and Nelson Nussbaum

We shine bright because of you!

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